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THE

EASTERN QUESTION.

BY

H. A. MUNRO-BUTLER-JOHNSTONE, M.P.

REPRINTED FROM THE "FALL HALL GAZETTE."

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THE EASTERN QUESTION.

CHAPTER I.

SINCE the debate on Mr. Yorke's motion in the House of Commons, the condition of Turkey has been much discussed in the press and in the country. But the chief issue raised has been that of the solvency of the Ottoman Government—an important part, no doubt, but still only a part, of the much wider subject which is known by the name of the "Eastern Question." The other issues raised by this question—viz. what are the British interests involved in the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire? whether or not the integrity of that empire is now compromised beyond redemption? whether there are elements of vitality and recovery still left in Turkey? what are the chances of these recuperative elements being promptly developed? whether any interference on the part of England would avert a catastrophe? and if so, whether we have, morally, politically, and diplomatically, the right to interfere, and what form that interference ought to take?—these have only been lightly and incidentally touched upon; and yet, as far as this country is concerned, they have a very momentous bearing on its policy and its interests. These, then, are the questions which I propose to discuss.

It ought not to be necessary to prove the importance to England of maintaining the integrity of the Ottoman Empire; for when a policy has been consistently maintained for a century past by every English statesman who has governed the country, the burden of proof ought certainly to lie on the shoulders of those who would alter or disturb

that traditional policy. Now Chatham, Pitt, Wellington, Castlereagh, Canning, and Palmerston were all of one way of thinking on this subject, and, in our own time, we thought it worth while to undertake a costly war in order to vindicate that policy. Chatham went so far as to say that he would not condescend to argue with a man who did not see the vital importance to England of maintaining the Ottoman Empire.

But, besides those of England, all the great statesmen of Europe have been agreed on the importance of pursuing the same policy; Gustavus III., Frederick the Great, Hertzberg, Napoleon, Talleyrand, Metternich, all agreed in this. But I know that authority alone, however weighty, will not do in these days; and I will try to prove this point, not only by authority, but by reasoning, for it is the cornerstone of my argument, and if this is not firm, the whole superstructure will be insecure. This is all the more necessary, inasmuch as by constant repetition a maxim of policy, once recognised as a practical truism, acquiesced in by everybody, becomes treated first as a trite commonplace, and afterwards as a vulgar error.

When people say that the Turkish Empire is our "road to India," I really believe that in the majority of cases they are thinking of a material road, and consider that if we can only secure Egypt, our "road to India" is safe. The Emperor Nicholas, in his offers to Sir Hamilton Seymour, took advantage of the *équivoque* contained in the expression, and offered to secure our "road to India" by putting this material road in our hands.

Now the Ottoman Empire is our "road to India" in a very different and a much larger sense than one simply geographical. We have 30,000,000 (sometimes computed at a very much higher figure) of Mahommedan fellow-subjects in India. On the whole, these subjects are not at present disaffected towards us. There are, no doubt, numerous fanatics among them, who give us from time to time

a good deal of trouble. There is on our north-west frontier a permanent camp of Wahabee fanatics, which is the refuge of Mahommedan disaffection throughout our possessions, and it has cost us a good many expensive campaigns, and may yet cost us a good many more. But the Mahommedans in general in India, and especially the well-to-do and wealthy Mahommedans, have always discouraged these fanatical manifestations; and, fortified by the decrees of their law authorities, have declared that Mahommedans may acquiesce peaceably in the British rule.

Hunter's "Mahometan Subjects" goes into the details of this subject, and proves this conclusively. Now this somewhat critical allegiance of 30,000,000 of our Indian fellow-subjects—the most fighting, and therefore dangerous element in India—depends in a great measure on the fact that there does exist, and has long existed, a close alliance in Europe between the head of their faith, the Caliph or Vicar of the Prophet, and the Sovereign of England and India. Hunter mentions the effect produced at a meeting held among Mahommedan natives at Calcutta, in order to discuss this very question of the obligation to revolt, by an old sheikh who appeared among them, having lately arrived from Constantinople, and who spoke to them of the friendship and alliance subsisting between the Sultan and the Queen. On this subject there is a letter written by Sultan Selim to Tippoo Sultan, quoted in Lord Wellesley's despatches, which is well worth referring to. The Turkish Sultan counsels submission to England, on the express grounds that an attack upon England in India would weaken her power in Europe, where her influence was absolutely necessary to the general balance of power. To what an extent the difficulty which we at present experience in governing India would be aggravated by a rupture or cessation of the old alliance between England and Turkey it would, of course, be difficult to estimate exactly; but it is not in a geographical or material sense,

but in a political and moral sense still more, that Turkey is our "road to India."

So much for our Indian interests. Now for our interests in Europe.

Let us suppose a partition of Turkey in Europe. I do not care whether we secure Egypt as part of the plunder or not; twenty Egypts—a hundred Egypts—would, I think I can shew, be no compensation to us whatever. When Catherine of Russia took a famous journey through the Crimea, with Joseph II. of Austria, they entertained each other (among other topics, I should fancy) about a partition of the Turkish Empire. A successful partition of Poland had made partitions popular and fashionable. The conversation went on smoothly enough till the Austrian Kaiser asked the Czarina, "How about Constantinople?"

Their scheme had struck on a rock and foundered. "Make it a free city," you will hear some innocent people say. I should like to see you do it. If you did, how long would it remain a "free city?" Why, the coveted prize, *that* in virtue of which the "Eastern Question" has been before the world for two centuries, is not Bulgaria or even Roumelia—it is Constantinople. Servia, Roumania, and the kingdom of Greece may, and no doubt do, desire an extension of territory, a revendication (as the French call it) of their old frontiers; each at the expense of Turkey, and at the expense also of the conflicting claims of each other. But, since the time of Peter the Great, and long before, Constantinople has been the dream of the Czars and of all true Russians, and there is not a Greek professor who does not hug the belief of living to see the re-establishment of the Byzantine Empire. It has been the dream of ambition for three centuries past, and does any rational man believe that men will forego the realization of this dream out of a disinterested regard for each other's feelings?

Where are the "free cities" of Europe now? The examples of Cracow, of Frankfort, and of Hamburg, must be

particularly encouraging to the creators of "free cities;" and make Constantinople a "free city" to-morrow, how many months or weeks would you give it to remain so? As a stepping-stone to acquiring it, I can understand those who advocate this policy. It is far easier to absorb and swallow a "free city," than the capital of an empire with a standing army and a large fleet. But, for any one else to be duped by such a transparent pretext, I confess, fills me with compassion. That Constantinople, if it ceases to be Turkish, will before ten years elapse become Russian, appears to me the least hazardous prediction to make in the whole range of politics.

Consider for a moment, now, what would be the consequences to us of Constantinople falling into the hands of a first-rate Power. The balance of power in Europe was seriously deranged by the partition of Poland; among other reasons, because it created a *solidarité* of interest among the three great military Powers in Europe. What is called (though technically, not quite accurately) the Holy Alliance was one consequence of it, and the alliance between these same Powers at the present day is a remote consequence of the same thing. Now that France's influence is practically extinct, these three Powers can do exactly what they like on the Continent, provided, of course, they are agreed; their power being only limited by the fact of England being still master on the seas. But if the Turkish Empire were partitioned, not only would a new principle of *solidarité* spring up among the partitioning Powers, but it would now be a maritime league, and a league with resources which must wrest the mastery of the seas from us. Fancy a great Power with the keys of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles in its possession! The Sea of Marmora would become one gigantic harbour, as large as all the harbours of Europe put together; in the hands, too, of a nation with inexhaustible resources, a practically unlimited supply of Greek sailors, and all the appliances of modern society at

its command. Wilhelmshaven and Kiel, two miserable scraps of harbours in comparison, have been supposed to endanger our maritime supremacy in the German Ocean. What would become of that maritime supremacy in the Mediterranean, with Constantinople in the hands of a first-rate Power? Constantinople in the hands of a first-rate Power, that knew how to apply its splendid resources, means, among other things, absolute supremacy at sea. But this is not all. Turkey and Russia are the two nations in Europe from which the raw material of manufactures is exclusively derived; place both countries under the same government and the same tariff, and the supply sources of your manufactures become dangerously contracted. Again, Turkey, including the nations who are bound by the Turkish tariff, is the very most promising field for our manufacturing enterprise. The progress of English cotton goods in Turkey has been prodigious, and it is capable of almost indefinite development. Now, Turkey has an almost nominal tariff. The Russian tariff is the most highly protective in the world. The very keystone of Turkish commercial policy (as I will shew in more detail in another chapter) is Free Trade. The whole basis and tendency of Russian commercial policy is protection. It was Turkey which defeated the policy of the Berlin decrees, and afforded British commerce an emporium and a means of inundating the Continent with its wares, in spite of and in the very teeth of those decrees; and it is Turkish commercial policy which offers English manufactures at the present day those advantages of free competition, by the help of which it is enabled to command the markets of the East. Wherever Russian influence extends, a prohibitive tariff makes successful competition with their own inferior products impossible.

Here, then, are a few cheerful results to England. Let us recapitulate them:—1. A loss of grip on the loyalty of the fighting element in our Indian possessions. 2. The loss of the command of the sea, the one weapon left in our

hands to counterbalance an absolute preponderance against us on land. 3. Our manufacturers deprived of their best and cheapest supply of raw material, and of the best markets for their wares.

So much for England. Now I do not much affect cosmopolitan and philosophical ideas, but no educated man will absolutely reject to entertain the following considerations. The importance in the world of the Mahommedan religion is a fact, which some may regret, but all will admit. It fills at this moment a greater space, and has a hold on the affections of a greater number of people, I believe, than any extant religion. Without attempting to fathom the designs of Providence, is it not remarkable that the one point of contact between the Christian and the Mahommedan civilizations, the only place where the one can hope to influence the other, is at Constantinople? And, if Christianity and Christian civilization have any new triumphs to achieve—if they are destined in any way to affect and improve the numerous populations professing the Mahommedan faith—it can only be by the influence which they can acquire at Constantinople. The Sultan—as Caliph or Vicar of the Prophet, on the one hand (and as such the recognised spiritual head of the whole Mahommedan Sunnite world in Africa, Asia, and Europe), and, on the other hand, as chief of a European State brought by degrees into the European State system, and therefore obliged to consider and conciliate European public opinion—is alone, in the Mahommedan world, amenable to powerful Christian influences, and able at the same time to give effect to those influences among the numerous populations subject to his political and spiritual supremacy. If Christianity and Europe wish for a field for new moral victories, where will they find a field so vast and so grand as is offered them here? Cut off the connection between the Turks and Europe, chase them into Asia, drive Moslemism back into itself, and the whole of this vast field of moral conquest—which we are taught to be-

lieve is so much grander than material conquest—is lost to European Christian civilization, and two huge Powers, represented in the old crusading phraseology by the Crescent and the Cross, stand confronting each other, deprived of all means of reciprocal action and influence. It has sometimes been suggested that Egypt might take the place of Turkey in this respect, and that European civilization might create for itself a field of influence in the Mahommedan States of the Khedive. Besides other weighty objections, the conclusive answer to such a suggestion is that the spiritual influence of the Caliphate—that by virtue of which alone the Sultan is enabled to exert influence over the Moslem populations—would be altogether wanting to a Sovereign of Egypt. You might as well propose to substitute his Catholic Majesty of Spain for the Papal Vicar of Christ, and endeavour to influence the Catholic world from Madrid instead of from Rome. The unsatisfactory condition of our Mahommedan subjects in India, in spite of the (in many respects) admirable and equitable administration of the country by the English, is a crucial instance of the difficulties which European civilization meets with in its direct dealings with Mahommedans. The same difficulty which we find in India, Russia, in spite of her boasted congeniality with Asiatics, experiences in an equal degree in the case of her Moslem subjects in the Caucasus, the Crimea, and Siberia, not to speak of the newly-acquired Khanates in Central Asia.

These last considerations may perhaps be considered philosophy, and not politics; but I trust that I have given some exclusively political reasons, independently, too, of authority, for thinking that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire is essential to England and to Europe.

In the next chapter I will shew, I fear too easily, that that integrity is at the present time seriously jeopardized.

CHAPTER II.

IF the integrity of the Ottoman Empire is of vital importance to us, the good government of that country must be a matter of corresponding interest. Notorious, palpable, flagrant, ruinous misgovernment must jeopardize every interest we have, and involve in ruin a country with even greater resources and capacities than Turkey. Now what are the financial and administrative conditions of Turkey?

Mr. Yorke's statement in the House of Commons on the financial condition of Turkey was so exhaustive and conclusive that it has never been challenged. Explanations, palliations, and excuses, have been volunteered from various quarters, but the facts themselves have never been disputed. The general result of his statement may be summed up by saying that Turkey has in twenty-one years accumulated 150,000,000 liras of debt (the lira equals 18s. 2d.), which imposes a fixed annual charge of 15,000,000 on her revenue; and that as the total amount of that revenue can by no possibility be set down at more than 22,000,000, there remains only 7,000,000 to meet all the requirements of her public service—those of the army, the navy, the huge civil list, and the whole Civil Service of the Ottoman Empire. In such a state of things, and with the greatest conceivable economy in every branch of the public service, an annual normal deficit of between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 liras is inevitable. The gross deficit this year amounted to 11,000,000 liras, but this was made up by a number of extraordinary payments which may not occur again. The normal deficit may be set down as 4,244,445 liras. Such being the general condition of Turkey's finances—a condition of virtual bankruptcy, actual bankruptcy being only staved off from year to year by new loans, imposing increasingly larger annual charges—can it be wondered at that every branch of the public service is starved; that the administration of justice is a mockery and a farce, and that

capital flies a country where it is subject to confiscation, and where civil justice has to be bought? This last feature is the saddest of all. Bad as is the financial condition of Turkey, the administrative condition is still worse. It is, in fact, the root of all the evils in Turkey; and a radical reform of its abuses must be the first step towards the regeneration of the country. A great English lawyer has said that the whole machinery of the State was only a frame for the twelve judges. Any one holding such an opinion, and conversant with the working of the mixed courts and the commercial and maritime tribunals in Turkey, with the ignorance and venality of its judges, the delays, miscarriages, and corruption which characterize them, will assuredly pronounce that the whole "state of Denmark" is rotten to the core. With judges living in a town as expensive as London, and to whom the decision of large commercial concerns is confided, and receiving a salary less than that of a body clerk of a justice of the Common Pleas in England, can we be surprised that "backshish" reigns supreme, and corruption becomes an obligatory vice? These facts are so notorious to every one living in the Levant, and indeed to all those having any business relations with the East, that of all the different assailants of Mr. Yorke's positions not one has ventured to impugn them. If conclusive evidence were needed, here it is:—We have twice lately been obliged to break off all communication with the maritime tribunal of Constantinople owing to its notorious corruption, and to refuse to refer British interests to this sink of iniquity; we have 2,000 British vessels annually passing in these waters; we have enormous maritime interests at stake, and these are confided to a court where the corruption of the judges, their ignorance and greediness, reduce the proceedings to a farce, for which suitors pay, and by which commerce is defrauded. This, then, is the state of justice—the backbone of a nation's prosperity and well-being—in Turkey. Is it marvellous that capital, ever

timorous and sensitive, flies from such a country, and that its vast resources lie unused and undeveloped?

In Turkey, all companies having business in the country must by law be registered in it, and are amenable to its courts of law; and this fact, coupled with the notorious incompetency and corruption of the judges, has the effect not only of discouraging, but driving out foreign capital and enterprise from a country where capital ought by every conceivable means to be encouraged. It can scarcely be matter of wonder, then, that with virgin forests and the richest mines, the forests are almost entirely neglected, and the mines unworked. Geologists tell us that Turkey contains the richest mineral wealth in Europe. In the flourishing times of the Turkish Empire there were ninety mines in active work; now there are two. Manufactures, too, requiring the outlay of large capital, and consequently security of property, are unknown in Turkey. Agriculture, therefore, is the one form of industry which is the source of wealth, and consequently of taxation, in the country. When people therefore talk of increasing the revenue and taxes in Turkey, that which must in the ultimate analysis bear the burden is the land. No foreigner has been able to make even a living out of the land; land is already burdened to the extreme margin of profitable cultivation. The following is a list of the taxes which fall exclusively on the cultivator of the soil:—The tithe, amounting to 8,565,000 liras; the tax on sheep, 2,020,000; that on pigs, 32,000; that on silk, 36,000; on spirits, 290,000 (with the exception of 30,000 which is paid by the holders of licences); Tapou mines, 565,000; tax on salt, 762,000 (minus 100,000 paid by the urban population)—making a total of 12,270,000 out of 22,000,000 liras total revenue paid exclusively by the agricultural population *quâ* agriculturists; for, as general consumers, they necessarily pay their quota also of the remaining taxation. Not only is the taxation increasingly burdensome, but the mode of levying the taxes makes the

yoke intolerable. The chief tax on the land is the *dime* or tithe. This is taken in kind, and, originally amounting to one-tenth of the produce, has received additions till it now stands at not 10, but $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and has been as high as 15 per cent.

Now the cultivator is not allowed to remove his produce till the tithe-collector has been round; and, as this functionary is under no obligation to make his call at any particular time, and often (from the fact either of capriciousness, or from the extent of his jurisdiction), comes at very late and inconvenient periods, the whole labour of cultivation is suspended for the convenience of the tithe-collector; and sometimes the harvest lies on the ground, and is spoiled before he arrives. Then the whole produce has to be weighed to ascertain the amount of the tax due. What a waste of labour must ensue, if all this weighing throughout the vast empire is put together! Then the cultivator is obliged at his own cost to convey the amount of the tax to the district depôt, sometimes a distance of fifteen miles—an additional tax upon him. But does all that is collected go into the Treasury? Far from it. The several sources of revenue are farmed to bankers and middle-men, and the largest fortunes in Turkey have been amassed by these farmers of the revenue. But although there is waste here, and a waste measured by the fortunes of the farmers of the revenue, so corrupt and arbitrary is the administration in Turkey, that I believe the people generally prefer having to do with the farmers of the revenue rather than with State tax-gatherers; the former, who make a commerce of the business, have an interest in conciliating the cultivators, so as to increase their profits, and their ways are less high-handed and tyrannical than would be the ways of official collectors. The very essence of a tithe is to discourage improving agriculture, and the tithe, injurious in itself, and excessive in amount, is further aggravated by the vicious mode of collecting it which I have described. The oppressive nature of the

tithe in a bad year is very clearly shewn by comparing the proportion of the tithe with the amount of the net produce of the land, the tithe itself being, of course, assessed on the gross produce of the land. Let us take as unit of comparison the Turkish deunum, equal to about 1,000 square yards, and 15 okes (the oke equals about 2.8 lb. avoirdupois) of seed-corn for the sowing of a deunum, and 50 piastres as the minimum cost of the cultivation of a deunum (2,000 piastres is considered the minimum cost for 40 deunums), and 1 piastre for the price of an oke of corn; then, when the harvest yields 14 to 1, the gross produce will be 210 okes, the net produce will be worth 160 piastres, or 160 okes, the tithe will be $26\frac{1}{4}$ okes, and the proportion of the tithe to the net produce 13 per cent. But, in a bad year, when the yield is only 4 to 1 on the seed sown (as has lately been the case in Asia Minor) the gross produce will be only 60 okes, the net produce will be worth only 10 piastres, or 10 okes, the tithe will be $7\frac{1}{2}$ okes, and the proportion of the tithe to the net produce 75 per cent.; thus taking little from those who have much, and taking nearly all from those who have little. The whole system of taxation, falling as it does almost exclusively on the producer, obviously required revision, and after the promulgation of the Tanzimat this necessity was recognised by the Government. The Khaththy Cherif of Gulkhave, as well as the Khaththy Humâioun of 1856, went so far as to enunciate the principles on which the revision should proceed, but unfortunately this necessary and salutary reform, like so many others, has hitherto remained a dead letter.

When, therefore, we consider that in Turkey commerce is free, and has always been free, that manufactures (except domestic spinning and weaving) do not exist, and that the whole weight of additional taxation falls on the cultivator of the soil, it is obvious that under such a system, there being no margin of profit and accumulation, a bad year, which would under ordinary circumstances be successfully tided

over, plunges the whole country into misery and want. This has been the case during two years past in Asia Minor. The severity of taxation, and the onerous mode of collection, are in a great measure responsible for the deplorable condition of that country. But that is not all. The famine was only local. It depended on the absence of rain during the growing season, and the absence of rain was only partial. In some parts of the country, separated by no great interval from the famished districts, there were rich harvests and great abundance; but the entire absence of means of communication, not only of railways, but of high roads, made it impossible for the abundance of one district to relieve the distress of another; and so sluggish and backward was the Administration at Constantinople to grasp the importance of the crisis, that no timely provision was made to relieve the famine, and large stores were collected at the ports without any kind of means of pushing them forward into the distressed districts. With £150,000,000 of debt incurred in twenty years, there has been scarcely any attempt to lay out even a portion of the money in the very first necessities of government, in opening up communications, and giving an outlet to the wealth of the country. Palaces, ironclads, Krupp guns, unproductive expenditure generally, have engulfed it all; whilst the primary, indispensable, unconditional duties of good government have been neglected; and the Asia Minor famine, which is computed to have cost 150,000 lives, is directly chargeable to a Government which has been guilty of this culpable neglect. Can we much wonder at the general administration of the country being so vicious, when we remember that easy compliance with vice and corruption at head-quarters is the sole present recommendation for office, and that, since the deaths of Ali and Fuad Pasha, there has only been one man, Midhat Pasha, who has had the courage even to attempt to carry out their policy, and that the average duration of each Viziership has been about five months?

The following is a brief summary of the ministerial changes which have taken place in the lifetime of the present Sultan. On his advent to the throne he found the late Mahmed Kypristy Pasha at the head of affairs. This Vizier was soon succeeded by Fuad Pasha, who, however, only remained a short time in power, and then resigned with his whole Ministry, and was succeeded by Youssouf Kiamil Pasha. Youssouf, in his turn, had to make room for the return to office of Fuad Pasha, who this time remained there over four years before he fell into disgrace. He was then replaced by Mahmed Ruchdy Pasha, called the *Matérédjian*, *Muterjin* who only enjoyed chief power for eight months, and was after that relegated to the War Office, being succeeded in the Grand Viziership by Ali Pasha, who remained there till his death. After him came Mahmoud Pasha, who disorganized everything that Ali Pasha and Fuad Pasha had been at such pains to build up, and was, after ten months' destructive tenure of office, positively driven out by the scandals which he created, and by the outraged voice of public opinion. Midhat Pasha was then called to the head of affairs. This reforming Vizier is undoubtedly the most popular man in Turkey, his popularity having been much enhanced by a comparison of his merits with the demerits of his successors. He is at the head of the reforming party in Turkey, and of those who consider that the regeneration of Turkey can only be effected by following in the lines traced out by Reschid, Ali, and Fuad, Pasha; but his own incorruptibility, and his determined opposition to corruption at head-quarters, brought about his dismissal after only seventy-five days' tenure of office, and Mahmed Ruchdy Pasha, the *Matérédjian*, came a second time into power, but only to remain there four months, and to be succeeded by Essaad Pasha, who, after fifty-eight days' tenure of office, was dismissed to the governorship of Conia. Another Mahmed Ruchdy Pasha was now called to supreme power, to remain there eleven months, and to be succeeded in his turn

by Hussein Army Pasha, the Soldier-Vizier, whose whole thoughts were concentrated on the organization of the army, and who seemed as incapable of grappling with the financial and administrative difficulties of the country, as of preserving it from the innumerable diplomatic rebuffs and defeats which it has lately undergone. He, too, has quite recently been dismissed from office, and for reasons which are creditable to him, having declined to yield to the pressure which the three military Powers have latterly attempted to put on Turkey in the matter of Baron Hirsch's railway concessions and schemes. He has been replaced by Essaad Pasha, who comes to office, if not with much administrative experience, with an unsullied reputation at any rate, and the prestige of a highly successful rule in the province of Conia. Unfortunately, recent news from Constantinople affirms that he, too, is to be no exception to the *régime* of ephemeral Viziers, and that his dismissal is already decided on, and his successor named. What but confusion and disaster can result from such a *régime* as this?

CHAPTER III.

DESPERATE as the state of things described in my last chapter undoubtedly is, I shall endeavour to shew in my next that it is not altogether hopeless, and that there are elements of regeneration in Turkey which, if vigorously used, may yet save the State. But there is a previous question which must be disposed of—Have we a right to interfere in the internal affairs of Turkey? I shall endeavour to shew that we have.

I have already shewn the enormous stake which we have in the integrity of Turkey. This stake might be considered sufficient on grounds of high policy to justify our interference in time to prevent disintegration. But for some,

such an argument is too general and vague. Nor will I lay too much stress on our right to interfere, grounded on the enormous pecuniary stake which British holders of Turkish bonds (up to £100,000,000) have in the financial integrity of the country. If people, tempted by usurious interest, deliberately embark their capital in a financially insecure concern, it may very plausibly be argued that they have no right to invoke the interference of their Government when the inevitable collapse occurs. But, on the other hand, £100,000,000 is a large sum, and represents important interests, and the claim of these bondholders on the aid of the Government in the event of a collapse is not without high precedent.

There is on this subject a circular memorandum of Lord Palmerston's, dated January, 1848, and addressed by him as Foreign Secretary to the representatives of her Majesty abroad, in which he clearly lays down that it is "entirely a matter of discretion" whether the British Government should interfere authoritatively to protect the British holders of foreign bonds in the case of repudiating States, and that its "right" so to interfere was, so far as international law was concerned, indisputable; and exactly the same doctrine was laid down by statesmen on both sides of the House, Lord Palmerston included, in a debate in the House of Commons in June, 1847, on a motion by Lord George Bentinck. If, then, we have a clear and indisputable right to "interfere authoritatively" in the event of a financial collapse occurring, it is surely not too much to argue that our right to "friendly remonstrance," to prevent such a collapse when it seems imminent, is equally indisputable; and with a normal deficit of something like £5,000,000 in the annual Budget, is or is not a financial collapse imminent? But I do not rest our right to interfere either on the general or the special plea.

The Crimean War, again, and the costly sacrifices which it entailed on us, might fairly be considered to give us a

right to interfere even "authoritatively," when we find the objects for which that war was undertaken and carried to a successful issue, jeopardized by influences which it is in our power to control. Now what was the object of the Crimean War? Certainly not the neutralization of the Black Sea; that was only an incident, an afterthought, a means, and only one means, of effecting our objects. These objects were—

1. To take away from Russia the pretext of single-handed interference in the affairs of Turkey, which she claimed by right of sympathy with 8,000,000 co-religionists, and in virtue of a forced interpretation of a particular clause (7th) in the Treaty of Kouchouk Kainardji, which she long and stoutly maintained gave her a protectorate over all the subjects of the Ottoman Porte belonging to the Greek Church. In lieu of this single protectorate, the Treaty of Paris created a kind of joint protectorate of all the Great Powers.

2. The second object aimed at was to make Turkey enter into the European family of nations, to strip it of its exclusively Oriental character, to bring it within the pale of European influences and opinion, to make it count in the scale of nations, and become more self-sufficient for its own defence by encouraging the means of European civilization—in a word, by becoming progressive instead of remaining stationary.

So distinctly was this one of the objects of the Western Powers, that Turkey was induced, not exactly to embody in the Treaty of Paris, but to communicate to the representatives of the States there assembled, the text of the "Khaththy Humâioun;" and the importance of this act was brought into full light by a solemn reference to it in the 9th clause of the treaty. It must be clearly understood that it did not give the collective Powers a treaty-right to interfere to see the clauses carried out; on the contrary, such a right was distinctly denied; but, next to this, it

was the most solemn engagement the Porte could take, and was, in point of fact, an engagement in honour on the part of the Sultan towards the contracting Powers, for the due and faithful execution of this solemn instrument.

Now, what was the Khaththi Humâioun? It was a confirmation and extension of the Khaththi Cherif of Gulkhane of November 3, 1839, which opened the era of equality and reform in the Turkish Empire—equality as between Christians and Mahomedans, reform and progress for the Empire generally. It was the enumeration and explication of the reforms initiated by the Sultan Mahmoud under the general name of the Tanzimat. The Khaththi Humâioun, together with the Khaththi Cherif of ~~Gulkhane~~, may be called the charters of equality and progress of the Ottoman Empire. The Khaththi Humâioun consists of thirty-five articles, and may be roughly divided into three parts:—

1. Those clauses which secure liberty of worship and equality of rights to the Christian inhabitants of Turkey.

2. A promise of codification of the laws, the establishment of mixed tribunals and special courts, a re-organization of the police and general administration of the country, prohibition of farming the revenue, correction of the abuses of collection, and severe laws against corruption and peculation.

3. A promise of a number of public institutions, such as banks, railroads, and canals, and a number of measures calculated to develop the material resources of the empire.

Now of the thirty-five articles, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 19, 22, and 23 have remained dead letters. (a) There were to be mixed tribunals of justice, codification of the law, translations of the codes into the different languages of the empire, settled modes of procedure; this has been translated, as we have seen, into mock courts, unpaid judges, arbitrary procedure, and corrupt decisions. (b) Farming the revenue was to be abolished, and a sounder fiscal system established; nothing of the kind has been done. (c) A solemn undertaking was entered into to grapple with the evil of corrup-

tion ; at present the whole administration is corrupt, and corruption is sanctioned and practised at the "Fountain of Honour." (d) Banks were to be established, to assist agriculture and come to the aid of commerce ; nothing of the sort has been thought of. (e) Roads, canals, and railroads were to be pushed forward with vigour, so as to open up the resources of the country : the absence of roads and canals has prevented the relief of a famished population ; and as to railroads, the only important line finished was a cloak for a most notorious scandal. (f) Foreign capital was to be invited and encouraged by every means, so as to develop the great resources of the country ; such vexatious obstructions have been placed in the way of foreign capital, that it has shunned the country, and men of integrity like Scott Russell and T. Brassey have had all their offers rejected ; unless the pashas catch a glimpse of "backshish," foreign enterprise is an abomination in their eyes. (g) Christians were to be admitted into the army on the principle of general equality ; nothing of the sort hastaken place.

These are some of the principal points in which the Khaththy Humâïoun has been violated, or rather unfulfilled. Now, as early as 1867, in answer to remonstrances from Lord Lyons as to the imperfect fulfilment of the terms of this firman, Fuad Pasha (at that time Minister of Foreign Affairs—he and Ali Pasha took turns as Grand Vizier and Foreign Minister) issued to the representatives of the Porte at all the great Courts in Europe a very remarkable circular, accompanied by a memorandum, containing considerations on the execution of the Khaththy Humâïoun, and which is worthy of the most serious and attentive study at the present day. In this circular the following remarkable sentence occurs:—"Notre but n'est pas de montrer que nous avons tout ou assez fait ; au contraire, nous voulons prouver que, si nous avons pu accomplir une partie de notre tâche, nous sommes aussi capables d'achever le reste." And in the memorandum he goes into many de-

tails, to shew that a real *bonâ fide* attempt had been made to carry out the terms of the Khaththyy Humâioun, and that a real progress along the whole line had been actually achieved. He proceeds to point out the great difficulties which the advocates of reform in Turkey had to meet and overcome—difficulties proceeding often from the prejudice and fanaticism of the populations; and he claims great credit for the success with which this prejudice and this fanaticism have to a great extent been removed. These practical difficulties, he says, are rarely taken sufficiently into account by the theoretical reformer. In the parts of the country farthest removed from the influence of the Government these difficulties were greatest, but no effort was left untried to instruct the populations, and to bring the whole country under the influence of enlightened ideas, and substantial progress had been attained. In the matter of religion, absolute toleration had been universally and successfully established, and as much effected in this respect in twenty years as had been accomplished in the course of centuries elsewhere; that in the way of administrative reform the whole country had been divided into “vilayets,” and every effort made to improve, organize, and purify the administration; that with reference to the other heads, as much had been done as could be done in the time; and he concludes the memorandum, as he had done the circular note, by saying that what had been done in the past was an earnest and a measure of what might be hoped for in the future.

1869

This was in 1867. Unfortunately, in ~~1868~~ Fuad Pasha died, and when he and Ali Pasha had both disappeared, blank darkness fell over the destinies of Turkey. ~~Fuad~~ ^{Abd} was succeeded by Mahmoud Pasha, who undid in three months what it had taken twenty years to build up; and with the exception of the brilliant but too short interval of Midhat Pasha's Grand Viziership, absolutely nothing has been done to carry out the provisions of the Khaththyy

Humâïoun; and the work, which Fuad Pasha's memorandum shews was *bondâ fide* commenced, absolutely ceased. Since then the Khaththy Humâïoun has been a dead letter, and corruption and incapacity have brought Turkey to such a pass that her very best friends almost despair of her recovery.

But what I am trying in this chapter to shew, is our right of interference. I contend that Lord Lyons's remonstrance about the imperfect fulfilment of the Khaththy Humâïoun, and the whole tenor of Fuad Pasha's reply, elaborately setting forth as it does the good faith of the Porte in the matter, clearly establish that, in the opinion of the Turkish Government at any rate, our right to interfere was incontrovertible. Let me recapitulate my arguments on this point:—

1. Our general interest in the welfare of Turkey gives us a general right to "friendly remonstrance."

2. Our special interest as the largest holders of Turkish bonds gives us a special financial interest, and a moral right to friendly interference at any rate, grounded thereon.

3. The expenditure of life and treasure in the Crimean War gives us a right to see that we are not filched of the objects for which that war was undertaken.

4. The communication of the solemn document of the Khaththy Humâïoun to the assembled representatives of the Great Powers at the Congress of Paris, and the reference to it made in the 9th clause of the Treaty of Paris, invest it with a character quite different from that of an ordinary firman, and constitute an engagement of honour on the part of the Porte towards the European Powers, which we, as the nation chiefly interested in the well-being and integrity of Turkey, have a right to call upon her to fulfil.

5. The fact of our having remonstrated on the tardy execution of the Khaththy Humâïoun when *bondâ fide* attempts were being made to carry it out, gives us *a fortiori* a right, and indeed puts us under the obligation, to re-

monstrate, when all attempts to carry out the provisions of that instrument have been abandoned.

Before I conclude this chapter, I must anticipate an objection which may be offered. It may be said that the Treaty of Paris expressly forbade the interference of any single Power in the internal affairs of Turkey. Now the answer to that is, that the interference contemplated by the prohibition had direct reference to the protectorate of the Greek subjects of the Porte claimed by Russia, to put an end to which the war was undertaken; and that an interference to the extent of a friendly remonstrance on the subject of the non-fulfilment of honourable engagements, is a totally different thing. Moreover, Lord Lyons's interference in 1867, and the whole tone of Fuad Pasha's reply, dispose conclusively of this objection. Over and above these arguments, and without laying undue stress on the repudiation of the Black Sea clause, let me point out that the Great Powers have continually violated this prohibition, if, indeed, any such there were; and that the three military Powers of Europe are busily engaged in meddling in the internal affairs of Turkey at the present moment, and that not only without the concurrence of England, but in spite of England's disapproval. Take the action of Russia, Germany, and Austria in the matter of the Roumanian treaties of commerce, or of Hirsch's railways, for example. Besides, from circumstances partly historical, partly founded on sympathy of interest, England stands with regard to Turkey in a totally exceptional position from the other European Powers. The interference of England is, as every one well acquainted with Turkey will testify, loudly invoked by patriotic Turks. "Why does not England interfere, and save Turkey from the corruption of our rulers?" is the refrain of almost every conversation on the subject. England is alone trusted of all the Powers in Europe; and her interference, so far from being resented, would be accepted as the sole means of salvation. But more of this hereafter.

I think I may consider that two steps towards my conclusion have now been taken, by the establishment of the fact that Turkey is at present in a very bad way, and that England has a moral, political, and diplomatic right to interfere. The question of course remains, whether that interference would produce any good result. This point I shall reserve for a future chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

I HAVE said that the condition of Turkey, in spite of all appearances, still admits of hope. I will in this chapter and the following try to establish this. I will by no means confine myself to any general argument derived from the fact that for three centuries the destruction, the rapid and immediate extinction, of the Ottoman Empire has been a favourite prophecy, and that, in spite of all these predictions, it has hitherto remained upright; nor from the fact that it has already weathered many a crisis apparently more dangerous and menacing even than that which threatens it to-day. At the time when its military prestige was destroyed by the war ended by the Treaty of Adrianople, its maritime power broken by a European coalition, its integrity destroyed by the forcible establishment of the kingdom of Greece, its ancient military force broken up by the destruction of the Janissaries, its recruiting ground subtracted from it by the revolt of the Albanians, and its very existence threatened by the arms of Mehemet Ali—all these events, each pregnant with destruction, occurring together—Turkey was saved by the genius of a Grand Vizier—Me-hemet Redschid Pasha. To say that an empire, which in a few years passed almost unscathed through the ordeal of such a concurrence of disasters, has not some inherent principles of stability and prosperity, appears to me wholly inconsistent. I shall endeavour, in this and the following

chapter, to discover what these principles are. But I feel that no such general argument will suffice; the evils which oppress and threaten Turkey have been pointed out in detail, and it is only by entering into details of its recuperative resources, that the impression which the details of its financial condition and administrative corruption are calculated to produce can be effaced.

And now with reference to its finances. If Turkey were in the position of a country in which the sources of wealth had been fully developed up to the limit of its capabilities, and, notwithstanding this, shewed a normal deficit of anything like £5,000,000 annually, the case might be considered desperate. But, on the contrary, the wealth and resources of Turkey are untapped. The geological formation of the country shews her to be in possession of the richest mineral wealth in Europe. Her boundless forests, containing the finest timber, are themselves mines of wealth. Her soil, favoured by a genial climate, is naturally the most productive in the world. Her population is numerous, intelligent, peaceable, and industriously inclined. Together with these natural advantages what do we find? Her rich mines left unworked; for the avarice and greed of the Government prevent the "exploitation" by individual enterprise of what it has not the energy and intelligence to work on its own account. The rich forests are neglected and unused, and the revenue derivable from them, which might be calculated at a very high figure indeed, is at present simply nominal. The rich and favoured soil, which might afford exports for the whole world, is not cultivated to the extent of one-half of the cultivable lands; and the mode of agriculture, from the discouragement chiefly to improvement which the ruinous system of tithe-collection causes, is innocent of all improvements. From calculations of experts on the subject, Turkey is capable of producing more than four times the amount of agricultural produce that she does at present; and the reduction of cost of trans-

port, which the establishment of roads, canals, and railways would effect, would in many cases double the value of the increased production. I do not think, then, that it is too much to say, that the resources of Turkey are absolutely untapped.

And what may be done by even a poor nation, with infinitely fewer resources than Turkey in the way of recovering the balance by its receipts and expenditure, is shewn by what Italy effected in this way a short time ago, before "the war scare" again deranged its finances. One of the most remarkable phenomena in the East is, the power of quick recovery shewn by Oriental States when good government replaces corrupt administration. The reason for this will, I hope, presently become obvious; but, in the meantime, the fact is worthy of attention. Midhat Pasha (afterwards Grand Vizier for too short a time) was appointed Governor of the "vilayet" of the Danube. Within two years of his appointment he managed, by upright and honest administration, to raise the value of the revenue from his large "vilayet" by 50 per cent. A similar result followed Ahmed Vefyk Effendi's commissionership at Broussa. The same thing occurred at Toulja during Ismail Kémal Bey's too short administration of that province; and it is a subject of hopeful augury to Turkey that all these three men are still alive and in the prime of their intellect. Turkey is not deficient in able and honest men: it is the Government that lacks the desire to employ them.

This phenomenon of rapid recovery, this apparently miraculous springing up of prosperity on the contact of good government, is often witnessed in the East. In Malcolm's "Sketches of Persia," vol. ii. p. 184, he says: "The city of Ispahan has more than doubled its inhabitants, and quadrupled its manufactures of rich silk and brocade, during the twenty years that Hazi Ibrahim has been governor." The connecting cause between good government and prosperity, which, in a complicated condition of civilization, is

indirect and sometimes difficult to trace, in the case of these primitive Oriental communities consists in a simple link.

All this would tend to shew, what is, indeed, the fact, that it is not the Turkish system which is at fault, but the administrators of the system. There are, in fact, no systematic evils in Turkey, no gulf, no hatred between classes as classes (I am talking of what exists between Mahomedans—the religious difficulty is of another kind), no industrial interests opposed to each other, such as those of agriculturists and manufacturers. All classes have the same interests and the same feelings, and the community is not divided by conflicting theories and principles of government. Vicious and corrupt administrators are the bane of an otherwise wholesome condition of society. Remove them and replace them by men like Midhat Pasha, Ahmed Vefyk Effendi, and Ismail Kémal Bey, and wealth and prosperity spring up of their own spontaneous energy.

The fact is, that Turkey is the only country in the world of which it can be said that anarchy comes from above. The system is sound and workable, the people peaceable and even resigned, and remarkably industrious; but the lower functionaries are invariably corrupt, and the higher corrupt and incapable as well. For Turkey is the purest instance of an autocracy in the world. In Russia, (the only other instance of an autocracy in Europe,) absolutism is limited by the public opinion of the army, by the powerful Tchín (the Civil Service), and by the Moscow "press;" in Persia and the East generally, by the Divine right of rebellion and the weakness of the Central Government. But in Turkey, absolutely no other power whatever balances or limits the caprice and power of the Sultan. This was not always so. It dates only from the reforms of the Sultan Mahmoud. Before his time two distinct powers limited the absolutism of the Sultans, and, when these were destroyed, a third power was called into play to do duty for the other two. These limitations were:—

1. The Janissaries, an unruly soldiery, a kind of Prætorian guard, themselves requiring to be held in check by the Albanians, who in their turn were counter-checked by the Christian Armatoles. Such was the system of checks and counter-checks which supported the fabric of the Ottoman Empire, and which lent itself as the instrument of change and revolution when these soldiers became, as they often did become, affected by the contagion of discontent, which too long a course of misrule excited in the body of the people; they then made themselves the armed organs of public opinion, and the "bad ruler," in the emphatic words of the historian, "disappeared." The Janissaries have now themselves disappeared, their destruction being the first-fruits of Sultan Mahmoud's reforms. Their turbulence and insolence, and their opposition to the Sultan's reforms, made them odious in the eyes of the people (a distinct proof that public opinion in Turkey is not necessarily unprogressive); and when Mahmoud appealed to the people against them, his appeal was answered by a rising *en masse*, and the Janissaries were massacred.

2. The second limiting principle of absolutism consisted in the Derebeys and great Provincial Pashas. Orders might be issued from Constantinople, but those great feudal chiefs, supported by their armed retainers, as independent as the Percys and Norfolks of our early Plantagenet kings, disregarded these orders as it suited them, and the Sultan's writ, so to speak, only "ran" in the provinces so far as they thought proper to permit it. The Sultan Mahmoud, with his Grand Vizier Mehemet Redschid Pasha, were the Louis XIII. and Richelieu of the Ottoman Empire. The Derebeys were destroyed, and their power utterly broken. Then the "Tanzimat," or new organization, was introduced; and the local aristocracy having been destroyed, and the Janissaries having disappeared, it was no longer necessary to humour the Albanians as a counterpoise. These, in their

turn, were reduced by the Grand Vizier, and the Nizzam, or regular force, substituted in their place.

Such, shortly, was the general course of Sultan Mahmoud's reforms, which mark such an important era in Turkish history. He was supported throughout by the Ulema and by the public opinion of the country, whose pride and confidence in the old order of things had been thoroughly broken by the national disasters to which I have already alluded. The public, too, felt the tyranny of the local magnates and their armed force, and looked upon the Central Government as a benign and reforming power, which was bent upon freeing them from it. The personal character also of the Sultan, and especially of his Grand Vizier, inspired the people with confidence—they had yet to learn that the yoke of the Central Government might be made ten times heavier than that of the Pashas, and that they soon would be flogged with scorpions. The mistake (and a very great one it was) which the Ulema and people committed—and they were masters of the situation (as without them the Janissaries could not have been destroyed and the reforms introduced)—was their failing to insist at the time on the formation of a great national divan, of a more or less representative character, which would have been a guarantee and security for the future; as it was, the old order of things was swept away, and pure, unmitigated absolutism substituted in its stead.

3. Ali Pasha and Fuad Pasha (who were real statesmen, and had a true instinct of the situation) deliberately resolved on a course of policy which should have the effect of strengthening their hands as against the autocratic power of their master, and they called into play a new balance to take the place of the old checks which had disappeared. They invited and encouraged the interference of foreign Powers, and especially of England and of France—so long as the latter supported England—and they thus found in diplomacy the counteracting and balancing force which

they could no longer look for in any power existing in the country. The immense personal influence exercised by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe over the Sultan himself—of which there are so many anecdotes at Constantinople—was in a great measure an influence created, and a weapon forged, for their own purposes by these two Turkish statesmen. So far from being jealous of it, or opposing it, they accepted it as the firmest support of their policy and views, knowing that they never could have carried out the reforms which they effected, but for the support—often given under the diplomatic form of remonstrance—afforded by the English ambassador.

Unfortunately, the third limitation of autocracy has also disappeared. Two sets of circumstances contributed to this result:—Firstly, the events of the Crimean War, coupled with French diplomatic encroachment, substituted French for English influence at Constantinople; French influence, too, instead of being employed for the good of Turkey herself, was occupied far more with petty French commercial and other private objects, and was made odious in the eyes of the Turks by the arrogance by which it was enforced. Then came the German War; and the Turk, always keenly alive to questions of prestige and power, threw off with undisguised relief, and, indeed, with total disregard of diplomatic “convenances,” the yoke which had so long galled him.

Then came a great opportunity for England. England had only to step into the place forcibly vacated by France. The Turk, who had not yet learned to rely on himself, having by a long schooling acquired the habit of recognising a controlling direction at Pera, would have rejoiced beyond measure to see the empty place occupied by England. At this crisis came Prince Gortschakoff’s famous despatch and the Black Sea clause controversy, and as a consequence of it the Russian ambassador was installed in the place which England dared not occupy.

And since that time, to all appearances and for all practical purposes, General Ignatieff's influence is paramount at Constantinople. Perhaps it would be still more correct to say that no diplomatic influence—in the sense in which Lord Stratford exercised it, and Ali Pasha and Fuad Pasha understood it—is possessed by the European Powers at the present day. For General Ignatieff's aims and views are perfectly understood by the Turks, and his action during the Cretan insurrection, which earned him from the Greeks a very uncomplimentary title, is not more highly appreciated by the Turks. The influence which he wields at Constantinople, backed as it is by the German and Austrian Embassies, is an influence founded purely and simply on fear. General Ignatieff's policy is generally considered by the Turks to consist in endeavouring to weaken their country by every means in his power; externally, by supporting the vassal States in all controversies with their suzerain (as in the Roumanian commercial treaties, the Montenegrin Podgoritza business, the Servian difficulty, the Cretan insurrection, &c.); and internally by discrediting the administration at every opportunity, picking quarrels through consuls with local governors, and in every case supporting the consuls by diplomatic action with the Porte, so that general resistance should be encouraged by the certainty of support at head-quarters; and all the time to be in close and intimate relations with the Sultan himself, and to encourage him in his autocratic courses by assurances of the sympathy of his brother Autocrat. For these reasons General Ignatieff has been called the Mephistophiles of Turkey.

Now, what is the policy of Germany and of Austria? Germany, having no very direct or immediate policy in the East, and being greatly concerned to secure Russian support in the West, has lent herself to be the handmaid of Russian policy at Constantinople, and Baron Werther, the German Ambassador, is the shadow of General Ignatieff.

Austria (unfortunate, too, in the selection of her present ambassador) has really abandoned all *haute politique* at Constantinople. It is a luxury which, in her present crippled condition, she cannot afford herself. The one condition which would justify her in even contemplating such a policy would be the active support of England; and she remembers what Prince Bismarck told her Minister at the time of the Danish negotiations, "England has ceased to count in Europe." The only independent policy open to her at Constantinople is a commercial policy, and she is energetically pursuing that, with the object of pouring Hungarian produce and Bohemian manufactures into the vassal States and into Roumelia. She is not even strong enough to pursue this policy without the diplomatic support of Russia, who exacts a reciprocal support in matters where she is herself interested. The commercial treaties with Roumania, and the diplomatic action of the three Powers in the matter of Baron Hirsch's railways, and the consequent fall of the late Vizier, were the immediate consequences of the *solidarité* of the three Powers.

Such being the diplomatic position at Constantinople, what has England been doing? England, not many years ago absolutely supreme at Constantinople, has entirely abandoned the field. I have heard it said, "So much the better; let England wash her hands of all participation in the intrigues and diplomatic scandals of this hotbed of scheming and jobbery. It is far more dignified to stand aside and have nothing to do with it." Some people can bear with this sort of argument better than I can; but let me just ask, who wants England to meddle with intrigue and jobbery? Do not let our antagonists change the premisses, and then demolish their own arguments as if they were ours. It was exactly by keeping out of intrigues and jobbery that England's influence was established and maintained so long in Constantinople; and what is there in common with intrigue and jobbery (with

the intrigues for concessions and the jobbery of railway schemes) in a policy of remonstrance and advice on the general good or bad government of the country, grounded generally on a community of interests and views, and specifically on the engagements entered into by means of a solemn instrument, which has received diplomatic and treaty recognition.

I find that I began this chapter by endeavouring to shew where are the elements of regeneration in Turkey; and, after shewing that the financial condition was not a ground for despairing of the fortunes of Turkey, considering the hidden wealth and undeveloped resources of the country, I went on to shew that the evils of Turkey were not systematic evils, but the result of bad and corrupt administration, and that anarchy in Turkey comes from above, and not from below. I then proceeded to try and shew that, unfortunately, the autocracy of Turkey was free from a single limitation—all the controlling forces having been swept away; the last limitation which disappeared being diplomatic interference and control. This led me into a disquisition into the state of the diplomatic relations at the present time at Constantinople, and I must resume the thread of my argument in the next chapter, and endeavour to shew what is the system and principle of Turkish administration which justifies me in saying that there are no systematic evils there, that the system is good, and that the administrators are alone at fault. It is a very interesting subject, and I am not sorry to reserve it for a separate chapter.

CHAPTER V.

I PURPOSE in this chapter giving some account of what the Turkish or Arabic system really is, by which it will appear what I meant when I said that there were no sys-

tematic evils in Turkey. I hope, also, an account of this system will afford an answer to the plausible objection, which one occasionally hears, to the effect that there is no use endeavouring to graft European civilization on Turkish customs, and that, in endeavouring to do so, the "Khaththy Humâïoun" aimed at the accomplishment of an impossibility. What the Khaththy Humâïoun really did, was to endeavour to revive principles which were fully acknowledged and practised in the times of Turkey's prosperity, and therefore the objection has no kind of weight. I think the account of the old Arabic system will also give some explanation of what is the most remarkable fact in history—the extent and rapidity of the success of Mussulman arms. The myth of a sensual Paradise, as the immediate reward of the faithful who fell in battle, having produced this miracle of success, is ludicrously inadequate to explain it.

Now, the Arabic system must be considered in two different aspects:—1. As it related to Mussulmans exclusively. 2. As it related to Mussulmans in their dealings with the professors of other creeds. Religion in the East has not the definite, distinct, and restricted meaning which it has with us. Everything with them is religious, and, on the other hand, they have no priesthood, no State Church, no clerical hierarchy. All those questions which with us would be termed matters of politics, are with the Mahommedans matters of religion, and invested with a religious sanction. Mahommedanism, as has often been explained, is, in fact, a religion, a code, and a civil polity—or, rather, these three things are different aspects of the same idea. It is not only the Koran which is the guide of Mahommedan faith, but also the traditions (*Sooni*) which the Arabs brought with them from the desert, and which invest their polity with the same sanction as their specifically religious dogmas. The chief ideas which this polity contained were cheap government, municipal liberty, direct taxation, and freedom of commerce. It was by seizing hold of these great

ideas, and opposing them to the monopolies, privileges, and the complicated and crushing fiscal system of the old Byzantine empire, that the Turks were enabled to overrun and conquer it with so much ease. In some respects it might almost be said, that their code and system of polity resembled those which extreme theories of progress in our own day aim at. It has been well pointed out, that in Europe we date from feudalism, and every victory of the masses in the way of doing away with privileges and establishing equality is reckoned so much progress; but equality of rights, and equal right to hold property, were the very bases of the Mahommedan code. In Europe, laws were made by one class for securing their own privileges, and to keep other classes in subjection. Nothing of the sort is known in the East. There equal laws are the heritage of all, and opinion and law are never for a moment in conflict with each other. Their code consecrating equality of rights was sanctioned by their religion, and administered by its professors. Then, as for their polity, equally enforced by the religious sanction, it may be summed up in the principles of municipal liberties, direct taxation, and freedom of commerce; and these three principles are not really three principles, but one principle, for the municipal institution is necessary to any wholesome application of the system of direct taxation; and, on the other hand, direct taxation is the very bond and *raison d'être* of the municipal institution, which has immediately decayed when the assessment and collection of taxes has been taken from it. Then, freedom of commerce is of course a corollary of direct taxation; for, as the revenue depended solely on national accumulation, any interference with the freedom of commerce was a drying-up of the sources of revenue, and made itself immediately felt. Such was the extremely simple system armed with which Mahommed and his successors carried their victorious arms from the Pillars of Hercules almost to the Wall of China.

Now this polity was peculiarly adapted to a conquering

race, securing the maximum of their liberties to the vanquished, with the minimum of superintendence on the part of the victors. Provided people "were not criminals, and had paid their tribute," they were exempt from all interference on the part of the dominant race. Their tribute, too (which was always light), was assessed and gathered by authorities freely chosen by themselves. Over a certain extent of country a political governor was placed, with an armed Mahomedan force; but he was strictly prohibited from interfering with the municipalities within the limits of their allotted functions. This system the Mahomedans established everywhere, and accordingly we find it in India as well as Turkey. India and Turkey are two countries which mutually elucidate each other. The Mahomedans did not meddle with the Hindoo village system. Over a certain number of Hindoo villages they allowed a chief to be appointed, who was responsible for the collection of the revenue, and was himself paid by a tithe. Neither did the Mahomedans enforce their code among the Hindoo population; it had only validity among themselves. After enduring for five centuries, we found this system in existence in India—a signal proof of its vitality and excellence.

In many respects, the municipal system so jealously guarded by the Mussulmans resembles that of the Romans; and in Spain the municipalities claim a double origin, and are sanctioned by a double set of traditions, the Roman and the Saracen. The municipal system—with its two corollaries, direct taxation and freedom of commerce—was the corner-stone and very essence of the Mahomedan system of polity. The civil governors were strictly prohibited from intermeddling in the collection of the revenue, and, as long as this collection was left exclusively to municipal officers, the municipalities flourished. Unfortunately, in process of time, corruptions crept in; but before I go into this, I would wish to point out some of the old Arabic maxims of finance, which seem to me so sound and wise, that it is not without

reason that many people see salvation for Turkey only in reverting to them.

1. Mahommed, in his last hours, expressed his satisfaction that he had never interfered in any way with the weights, measures, exchanges, or currency of any nation. This gives the key to the Mahommedan system of dealing with conquered nations.

2. It is a maxim of Arabic finance that the expenditure of a State ought to be adjusted to the fixed and legal revenue, not the revenue accommodated to the expenditure. If the Turks had but held fast by this economical maxim!

3. It is another maxim, that the tax on any product ought only to be gathered after the collection of that produce; which at once discountenances all indirect taxes, which anticipate production in manufactures, and all farming of the revenue, which leads indirectly to the anticipation of production. We may compare with these wise maxims—as shewing the political purity of the precepts of Mahommed—a saying of the Prophet, “that one hour profitably spent in the administration of justice was worth seventy years of prayer.”

I have said that, in process of time, corruptions crept into the Mahommedan system of polity, into the system which consecrated municipal institutions, and the collection of direct taxes by the exclusive agency of the municipal officers. In early times there was no such thing in Turkey as farming the revenues; and the governors of provinces, who were for the most part appointed for life to rule over their Livas or small provinces, were strictly prohibited from interfering in any way with the municipalities in the assessment and collection of the revenue. But after Mahommed II.'s time a double change took place. The vicious system of farming the revenues (*iltizam*) was introduced, and annually appointed governors were substituted for the pashas and beys who had before been nominated for life. In process of time these two changes produced a third corruption, for these new annual governors became themselves

the farmers of the revenue, and were thus allowed to usurp attributions which formerly devolved exclusively on the municipalities. These, in consequence, now languished and decayed. But the evil did not stop there. These new governors, being persons of small consideration (the precariousness of the tenure prevented men of reputation and weight accepting the office), were unable to give the required security at Constantinople. They were therefore obliged to have recourse to the aid of bankers and sureties (*sarafs*), who thus rose into importance, and became the virtual governors, mayors of the palace, and collectors of the revenue. One corruption soon brings others in its train. All sorts of fiscal concessions had to be made by the governors to these Armenian *sarafs*, their virtual masters, at the expense of the taxpayer and cultivator. Taxes were allowed to be collected in anticipation of production, contrary to what we have seen to be a canon of Arabic finance, and to the serious detriment of the cultivator (who had often to raise money at usurious interest—from the same bankers, too, very often—in order to pay his contributions), but to the great profit of the bankers, who soon grew rich in consequence, and eventually became a power in the State, making their influence felt, even by the Central Government at Constantinople.

Such was the gradual growth of corruption in the originally sound fiscal system of the Arabs. When, therefore, the Khaththy Humâïoun talks of abolishing the farming of the revenue, and prohibiting civil governors from being immixed in the matter, we thus see it is only reverting to ancient and recognised maxims of Arabic polity. Then, as a corollary of direct taxation, freedom of commerce was enjoined. This, too, was of the very essence of the Mussulman system. The Hajis and fakirs and early pilgrims were the first votaries of commerce, and the sanctity which hedged them around was extended to merchants generally. These have always en-

joyed immunities and securities which were not shared by the sister occupations, agriculture and manufactures. The foreigner, too, was invested with the sacred character of guest (*mussafir*), and allowed to pursue the avocations of commerce without let or hindrance. It is a great mistake to suppose that the immunities and privileges enjoyed by foreign merchants were extorted either from the weakness or ignorance of the Turkish Government. The first capitulations with France date from 1535, when Solymán the Magnificent was on the throne, and when the proudest nations in Europe were treated by the Sultans as inferiors. It is, on the contrary, as I have shewn, a clear deduction from Arabic principles that commerce should be free, and every protection and consideration afforded to its votaries. Thus, what it has taken us in Europe centuries to achieve, centuries of struggles with monopolists, classes, and interests, was arrived at at once by the genius of the early Arab legislators; and progress in Turkey can only aim at securing and consolidating these principles. A very small tax—never amounting to as much as one-tenth of the total revenue—was imposed on merchants on the transit of goods, called in Roman phraseology “*portorium*,” and was to be exclusively expended on roads and communications. No people in the world ever came up to the Mussulmans in the pains they took to keep up roads, bridges, and communications of all sorts, aqueducts, works of irrigation, and public works in general. See what they effected in this way in Spain, especially in Grenada, and in India. In this latter country they established regular posts, by which they could communicate with the most distant parts of their dominions—from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic. Contrast what the Mussulmans did in this respect, in the days of the purity of their system, with what the Turks have done, or rather not done, since in Roumely and Anatoly.

I have already pointed out the immense advantages which England and English commerce can derive from these free-

trade principles of a nation which is essentially agricultural, and which requires chiefly the very manufactures which we can produce at a lower price than any other nation in the world, which opens up intercourse with 60,000,000 of people with the same economical requirements, and which has consecrated and surrounded with the sanction of religion the principles of free trade and a low tariff.

In the general principle of leaving absolute freedom to the municipalities, and in not interfering with people who paid taxes and kept the peace, is implicitly contained the principle of religious toleration. And, accordingly, we find this principle (with certain allowances for outbreaks of fanaticism) consecrated in Mahommedan law and practice, wherever, as generally happened, the Christians formed a community by themselves, and were not mixed up with a Musulman population. And, politically speaking, a nation can scarcely be accused of religious intolerance, that afforded, at the risk of war, a refuge to the Jews of Spain and the Protestants of Hungary, from the persecution of Christian fanaticism, just as they did to the Polish and Hungarian refugees from political persecution.

The Koran and the Sooni being the law exclusively applicable to Mahommedans, the Christians were left the safeguard of their own laws, administered by functionaries appointed by themselves. It is only when Mahommedans and Christians are mixed up as pleaders in the same suit that a difficulty arises; and, as Mahommedans and Christians cannot, by law, be mutually guardians and trustees, this difficulty arises less frequently than might be supposed. Where it does arise, mixed courts have been appointed, and the Khaththy Humâioun enters into lengthy details to secure the integrity and good-working of these mixed courts. It must be confessed that everything relating to them is, as I have shewn in the second chapter, about as unsatisfactory as it can be; but, as they were no part of the old Arabic system, I am not called upon to discuss them in this chapter.

I think I have shewn what I undertook to shew, that the Arabic system, on which the Turkish system is founded, was, if not inspired, at any rate wisely devised for securing the great ends of cheap government, equal rights, and freedom of commerce, and that the Turks have this great advantage, in the work of reforming their present corrupt administration, that they can appeal to principles which are thoroughly national, and invoke reforms which are in the great lines of the Constitution.

Before I conclude this chapter, I should like to answer an objection which is often urged against the possibility of successful reform in Turkey. It is said, "Turkey must, from the very fact of its polity, its code, and its religion being indiscriminately invested with the same sanctions, necessarily be unprogressive; for progress and reform, which mean change, in any of these subjects, must be an inroad on and a violation of their inspired teaching, and as such must meet with fanatical opposition from the body of the people, led by the expounders of their law." Now I am not going to deny that among a population like that of Turkey, so much behind Western Europe in the lights, teachings, and experiences of modern civilization, the difficulties in the way of reform are not greater than they would be in England, France, or Germany. No candid Turkish statesman would probably maintain that this is not so. But I entirely deny that the difficulty is of the insuperable dogmatic character which the objection hints at. The inspired character of the Christian sacred books has not prevented progress in religion in Europe, and for this reason, viz. that the inspired writings are sufficiently elastic in expression to admit of progressive developments and interpretations; otherwise religious thought, and with it civilization, would have been strangled in the Christian world. And so it is, and perhaps even more so, with the Koran. I will give one example which conclusively proves this. When the new mixed courts were proposed to be introduced into Turkey by the Tanzimat,

they at first raised a storm of opposition, especially on the part of the mufti, the expounders of the Mahommedan law, with whose exclusive jurisdiction they so seriously interfered. The Sultan himself was not without grave misgivings lest he should be violating religious ordinances by sanctioning the proposed reform. In order to overcome his scruples, Ali Pasha, or Fuad Pasha (I forget exactly which of them), introduced into the palace certain mufti of great learning and reputation as expounders of the law, who, in answer to the questionings of the Sultan, convinced him, by quotations from the Koran itself, that the proposed reform was not contrary to, but in accordance with, the written precepts of the Prophet. In fact, the expressions in the sacred writings are vague and general enough to admit of any gloss; and it only requires a wise and astute vizier, to make this vagueness subservient to his own beneficent ends. The objection, then, to which I have referred has little if any weight. The readiness with which Sultan Mahmood's stupendous reforms were accepted, and the popularity of the Khaththy Humâioun in Turkey, abundantly shew that all that is wanted there is a wise and enlightened initiative on the part of the statesmen at the head of affairs.

CHAPTER VI.

I now come to the practical question, In what way should we interfere, and what is the likelihood of our interference being of any avail? I should like first to point out that, whatever may be the disadvantages of autocracy in the absence of any guarantee for the wisdom or patriotism of the autocrat, yet that—given a wise and good autocrat—reforms can undoubtedly be carried out, and abuses removed, in an incomparably shorter time under the *régime* of an autocracy than any other. Autocracy, in fact, is a sharp weapon, which cuts both ways, for good or for evil. Now,

it has been said that the condition of Turkey is hopeless, because the conjunction of two rare contingencies is necessary for its redemption—viz. the combination of a wise and patriotic Sultan and a capable and energetic Vizier; but, on consideration, these two contingencies reduce themselves to the first only, because, given a wise and patriotic Sultan, there is no lack of patriotic and capable men in the Ottoman Empire. The crying mischief in Turkey is the absence of all desire at head-quarters to employ them. After Mahmoud Pasha had, during his brief tenure of office on the death of Fuad, upset his predecessor's work and disordered the whole empire, Midhat Pasha came into office, and if he had been allowed to remain there he would very soon have set things right again, by following in the lines traced out by Ali and Fuad Pasha, and by the terms and provisions of the *Khatthi Humâioun*; but, unfortunately, exactly on account of his own incorruptibility, and his determined opposition to corruption at head-quarters, he was, after less than three months' office, summarily dismissed from power, and since his time none but yielding Ministers have retained, even for a brief space, the confidence of the Sultan.

Now it was just at such a crisis as that of the dismissal of Midhat Pasha that Lord Stratford de Redcliffe would have interfered with effect. On more than one occasion he did so interfere, either to prevent the fall, or secure the return to office, of Redschid Pasha; and the story runs at Constantinople, that on one memorable occasion he declined to confer the Order of the Garter, which had been sent out by the Sovereign of England to the Sultan, until he had recalled his Grand Vizier. Sir Henry Elliott, after the fall of Midhat Pasha, did make a slight remonstrance, and, slight as it was, and notwithstanding the negative turn which he unfortunately gave to it, it was for a long time the talk of Constantinople, even in the bazaars, and excited hopes that the English Government were going to throw off their attitude of indifference, and would concern

themselves again with the welfare of Turkey. What actually took place was this: After the dismissal of Midhat, Sir H. Elliott had an interview with the Sultan, and expressed to him the disappointment and concern which the fall of the reforming Grand Vizier would cause in England. The Sultan seemed much vexed and annoyed by the remark, and Sir H. Elliott, instead of maintaining the ground he had taken up and enforcing his protest, added apologetically, that the reason why public opinion in England would be disappointed was, that it would regard the dismissal of Midhat as likely to lead to the return of Mahmoud; thus giving his remonstrance (to the great relief of the Sultan, and to the injury of the cause of reform in Turkey) a merely negative turn, apparently satisfied with the mere assurance that Mahmoud should never be recalled to power. Slight and ineffectual and inadequate as this remonstrance was, to produce any considerable effect on the direction of affairs in Turkey, it raised for the time the spirits of the whole patriotic party in the country, whose hopes of better government, now that all other checks were removed, rested exclusively on the diplomatic action and interference of England. Now what I am anxious to bring out clearly is, that Ali and Fuad Pasha were wise in their generation in invoking foreign (and especially English) interference in the affairs of their country, and that, as matters now stand in Turkey, in this diplomatic control and interference consists the only possible limitation to the autocratic power of the Sultan, and the only present hope for Turkey.

Some people will maintain, in spite of my special arguments to the contrary, the absoluteness of the rule of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of another country, and will even go so far as to say that, if Turkey is determined to follow the ways which lead to destruction, it is no business of England's. I think I have shewn in my first chapter that it is the business of England, and a very pressing business too, and I only want to protest here, and as energeti-

cally as I can, against the doctrine that we can treat Turkey, or any other Oriental or semi-Oriental Power, as we do the great Powers of Europe, and apply at Constantinople and Teheran the same maxims of policy which are suited to Paris and St. Petersburg.

Nothing but confusion and disaster can arise from such an indiscriminate application of general maxims of policy. As a distinguished Turk once said to me :—" Nous sommes nous comme tous les Orientaux, et il nous faut une pression quelconque pour nous faire marcher." The solemn recognition of the Khaththi Humâioun, by the reference to it in the 9th clause of the Treaty of Paris, gives us a diplomatic *locus standi* for interfering, and indicates the exact direction of our interference. Each clause of that instrument contains the germ and explication of a necessary reform for Turkey, and it is by keeping in the line of that reform that the regeneration of Turkey can best be brought about. There are not wanting, on the one hand, energetic and capable men in Turkey to undertake the work, and who do not despair of the fortunes of their country ; nor are the resources of the country, on the other hand, however gravely compromised, so utterly ruined as to make their task hopeless. There is yet time, although by no means too much time, to save the State. The only action I wish England to take is the friendly action of a man who sees a friend rushing down a steep place, and puts out a friendly hand to save him. We cannot afford to let Turkey destroy herself ; she is too necessary for us, and her salvation is identified with our own imperial interests. If we adopted a more energetic course at Constantinople, we should not be left to fight the battle single-handed. Not a friend of Turkey, nor a patriotic Turk, but would support the British ambassador, who would thus become the nucleus of a powerful opposition to the corrupt and incapable men who at present have it all their own way at Constantinople. The scales would be turned in favour of the patriotic party, and the Turks themselves would do

the rest. Moreover, from the exceptional position which we hold in Turkey, we alone of all the nations in Europe are capable of taking up this position.

It may be interesting to trace the causes of this exceptional position of England, but the fact is quite undeniable. It is no doubt in a great measure founded on the identity of our interests, and the appreciation of that identity by the Turks. They remember that the least suspicious and the most friendly of the other great Powers—I mean France—in the hour of Turkey's greatest crisis, aided and abetted Mehemet Ali; and that previous to that time the French had, without the formality of a declaration of war, piratically invaded and seized Egypt, and that it was England who, after driving the French out, handed back his dependency to the Sultan, when the title of "Father and Pasha" was decreed to Sir Ralph Abercromby. Long previous to these events, in the time of Elizabeth and the Cecils, the Turks made a distinction between the English and other Christians—a preferential feeling which the statesmen of those days took care to foster by making the Queen of England, in a letter which she addressed to the Sultan, style herself "The Defender of the Faith against other Christian idolaters." Certain is it that at all times Turkey has willingly accorded an exceptional place of confidence and favour to England, whose remonstrances and advice have a weight with the Porte to which those of no other nation can pretend. I have already referred to Sultan Selim's action with reference to Tippoo Sultan. I may refer further to the action taken by Turkey, which contributed to so large an extent to defeat the Berlin decrees, and the general support to English policy which it has always been a political maxim of the Porte to give.

If we maintain our present position of non-intervention and indifference, it is not difficult to predict the course which events will take. *Pari passu* with financial embarrassment and collapse, and internal disorganization, the re-

sult of it, a number of external complications will arise to aggravate the situation—complications which already exist in embryo with most of the vassal States, and which are only waiting for the *mot d'ordre* to be promoted to the dignity of European questions. The Eastern question is like a hidden disease, which may break out at any moment in any part of the body politic. We have lately had a whole crop of these questions of secondary importance. The Roumanian treaties of commerce, the Podgoritzza affair with Montenegro—these are only samples of innumerable others always ready to rise to the surface. Servia has set her heart on the possession of Svornich, Montenegro wants a port, and a thousand other pretensions of every degree of importance will always afford pretexts for a “question,” whenever it suits the policy of the enemies of Turkey to put one on the “tapis.” When the proper moment comes, one after another of these “questions” will arise. The three military Powers, as they have hitherto done according to their settled policy, will support the vassal States against their suzerain, and the Porte, after more or less resistance, will give way. At last public opinion in Turkey will be stirred and excited by these continued surrenders, and the Government will not be allowed to recede any further; a stand will be made, and the “question” will assume menacing proportions. A joint military demonstration will then probably be made on the part of the three, or two of the three, military Powers to put pressure on the councils of the Porte. England will of course protest, and equally of course her protest will be disregarded, as it was in the Danish question; the fanaticism of the Turks will very likely at last drive their Government into war, and the beginning of the end will then be at hand. I, for one, protest—and as energetically as I can—against waiting until that day arrives. We can now interfere with effect, our interference is an unquestionable duty, demanded by the essential interests of our own country. Soon it may be too late. Cor-

ruption and decay will have prepared the work of destruction, and slight external pressure will complete it.

Nor is it doubtful what direction that interference ought to take, for it is in a return to the policy of Ali Pasha and Fuad Pasha that the safety of the Ottoman empire alone consists. Neither the English House of Commons, nor the English Cabinet, can of course "undertake the Government of Turkey;" but what the latter can do is this, to insist, with the whole weight of its friendly authority, upon a reforming Vizier being placed at the head of affairs in Turkey, and being kept there for a sufficient time to bring about the essential changes required in the administration of the country. This is all that is needed; and this assuredly is not beyond the extent of England's influence in Turkey. If we had no other leverage to work with, which is far from being the case, the threat of refusing, in the event of our remonstrances being disregarded, to help her with another lira in her annually recurring financial embarrassments, must necessarily bring the Turkish Government to its senses. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe had no such lever wherewith to act on the councils of Turkish statesmen, and yet he managed to make England's influence paramount at Constantinople.

There is only one objection of weight which I have ever heard urged against such diplomatic action of England; and it is this:—Given the supposed views and aims of the Governments hostile to Turkey, and the policy which their representatives to the Porte are pursuing with so much present success, what would be the effect produced on these Powers by seeing Turkey seriously bent on mending her ways, and pursuing the work of reform and material development in real earnest? Would they not see the necessity of precipitating matters, by raising one of the numerous "questions" which I have referred to as always simmering in Turkey, and try and pluck at once the fruit which was no longer ripening to their hands?

I think there is force in this objection, and that such would very likely be the policy which would naturally suggest itself to Powers traditionally hostile to Turkey. The whole state of Turkey is at present so bad, the work of reform would have to be so thorough, that she would undoubtedly have to pass through a *mauvais quart d'heure* before her house would be set in order. During this interval she could not expect to exercise all the rights and privileges of a well-ordered and vigorous empire; she would have to adopt a very conciliatory policy in her external relations, with the vassal States especially; to make concessions here and there very likely, and do her best to tide over difficulties which might arise, and put her trust in the future. The statesmen who would undertake to face her domestic difficulties, to right her disordered finances, and to correct her administrative abuses, would be exactly the men to recognise that they were drawing on the future, and must submit for a time to the necessity of a temporizing external policy. They would scarcely be the men to fall into the first pitfall prepared for them by the enemies of their country.

Besides, Europe cannot by any means be said to look with favour on schemes of ambition and encroachment on the Danube. It may, perhaps, reluctantly acquiesce in the view of the hopelessness, under present circumstances, of bolstering up the Ottoman Empire, and, in spite of itself as it were, listen to schemes of partition and change; but let Europe only see the glimmer of a hope of genuine reform and permanent stability in Turkey, and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire would once again take its place as an accepted object and maxim of European policy. The very same Powers who are now hostile, or quasi-hostile to Turkey, would at once strongly deprecate and thoroughly discountenance any truculent policy towards the Porte, and would insist on securing to it a fair chance of gathering the fruits of its new reforms. The *solidarité*

between the great military Powers in the present day with reference to Turkey is not an indissoluble *solidarité quand même*—it is founded on the present state of the facts in that country. Change those facts, and the *solidarité* disappears, to make room for a return to the old traditionary policy of the individual States.

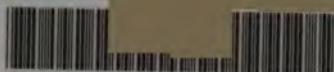
Report states that some short time ago, when M. Keudell was at Constantinople as German Ambassador to the Porte, he was instructed to adopt quite an opposite policy to that pursued by Baron Werther at the present day; and it was only upon the hopelessness of receiving any efficient support from England becoming apparent, that that distinguished diplomatist was removed to Rome, and M. d'Eichmann, and subsequently Baron Werther, substituted for him. Austria, too, looking at her permanent interests and her traditionary policy, must be looked upon in Eastern matters as the ally of England rather than that of Russia, although she is not strong enough at present, as I have already pointed out, to pursue an independent policy of her own. It is, therefore, on the initiative of England that depends, ultimately, the policy of Europe towards Turkey. Consider for a moment, in all its ramifications, the consequences which the "masterly inactivity" of England produces on the policy and destiny of Europe and of the world!

I have in this concluding chapter endeavoured to shew that we ought to interfere diplomatically, and with the full force of friendly authoritative remonstrance, in order to bring about a new order of things in Turkey, and I have given my reasons for thinking that that remonstrance would be effectual. This is what I undertook to try and shew.









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